IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A law retrieval system constituted by connecting a user information transmitter-receiver by which a user transmits a retrieval condition and receives a retrieval result and a law retrieval server for performing retrieval processing in sequence in accordance with the retrieval condition received from said user information transmitter-receiver, via a communication network, and by connecting data storage means, in which laws, judicial cases, and data required for retrieval are accumulated, to said law retrieval server,

wherein said data storage means includes a constitution and statute database in which data of the constitution, laws, government orders and ministerial orders, ~~and the like~~ is accumulated, a judicial case database in which data of judicial cases is accumulated, and at least one database out of a meta-keyword database constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords ~~such as slang words~~ with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords, a verb and object database constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them, and an aid flow database previously constructed as aid flowcharts by predicting information gathering query patterns for cases, and

wherein said law retrieval server includes, in correspondence with said each database, at least one retrieval processing means out of meta-keyword retrieval processing means, when a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword from said meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing, verb and object retrieval processing means for reading a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing, and aid flow retrieval processing means, when a retrieval pattern by a received retrieval keyword matches a pattern of an aid flowchart, for transmitting requests for additional information in sequence in accordance with a flow of the aid flowchart.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A law retrieval apparatus, comprising:

data storage means including a constitution and statute database in which data of the constitution, laws, government orders and ministerial orders, ~~and the like~~ is accumulated, a judicial case database in which data of judicial cases is accumulated, and at least one database out of a meta-keyword database constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords ~~such as slang~~

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~~words~~ with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords, a verb and object database constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them, and an aid flow database previously constructed as aid flowcharts by predicting information gathering query patterns for cases, and

a law retrieval server including, in correspondence with said each database accumulated in said data storage means, at least one retrieval processing means out of meta-keyword retrieval processing means, when a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword from said meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing, verb and object retrieval processing means for reading a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing, and aid flow retrieval processing means, when a retrieval pattern by a received retrieval keyword matches a pattern of an aid flowchart, for transmitting requests for additional information in sequence in accordance with a flow of the aid flowchart.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A law retrieval apparatus, comprising:

a meta-keyword database constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords ~~such as slang words~~ with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords;

an information analysis portion for determining whether or not a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword; and

a retrieval processing portion, when the determination by said information analysis portion is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword therewith from said meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing<u>;</u>

<u>whereby retrieval can be easily and efficiently performed with knowledge of the law</u>.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A law retrieval apparatus ~~according to claim 3~~, <u>comprising:</u>

<u>a meta-keyword database constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords;</u>

<u>an information analysis portion for determining whether or not a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword;</u>

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a retrieval processing portion, when the determination by said information analysis portion is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword therewith from said meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing, and

wherein said meta-keyword database is set such that the non-retrieval keyword and a law term having meaning equal or similar thereto as the retrieval word associated with the non-retrieval keyword are one-to-one or one-to-many.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A law retrieval apparatus, comprising:

a verb and object database constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and by associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them, and

a retrieval processing portion for obtaining a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing;

whereby retrieval can be easily and efficiently performed with knowledge of the law.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A law retrieval apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising: , comprising:

a verb and object database constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and by associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them,

a retrieval processing portion for obtaining a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing,

an information analysis portion for analyzing whether a received keyword is a verb or object, and

an input/output processing portion, when an analysis result by said information analysis portion is either a verb or object, for reading the other object or verb associated therewith from said verb and object database and outputting it,

wherein said retrieval processing portion receives the other verb or object after the output by said input/output processing portion to obtain a retrieval keyword associated with a

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combination of the verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing.

Claims 7-12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (original): A computer program, comprising:

meta-keyword retrieval processing means for determining whether or not a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword and, when it is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword from a meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing;

verb and object retrieval processing means for reading a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from a verb and object database to perform retrieval processing; and

aid flow retrieval processing means, when a retrieval pattern by a received retrieval keyword matches a pattern of an aid flowchart, for transmitting requests for additional information in sequence in accordance with a flow of the aid flowchart.

Claim 14 (original): A computer program, comprising:

an information analysis portion for determining whether or not a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword; and

a retrieval processing portion, when the determination by said information analysis portion is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword therewith from a meta-keyword database constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords to perform retrieval processing.

Claim 15 (original): A computer program, comprising:

a retrieval processing portion for obtaining a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from a verb and object database constructed by associating retrieval keywords based on combinations of verbs and objects related to each other to perform retrieval processing.

Claim 16 (original): A computer program, comprising:

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an information analysis portion for analyzing whether a received keyword is a verb or object;

an input/output processing portion, when an analysis result by said information analysis portion is either a verb or object, for reading the other object or verb associated therewith from a verb and object database constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them, and outputting it; and

a retrieval processing portion for receiving the other verb or object after the output by said input/output processing portion, and for reading a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of the verb and object from said verb and object database to perform retrieval processing.

Claim 17 (canceled).

Claim 18 (currently amended): A computer-readable record medium recording therein said program according to at least any one of claim 13 to claim [[17]] 16.

Claim 19 (canceled).

Claim 20 (currently amended): A computer-readable record medium, comprising:

a recorded constitution and statute data in which data of the constitution, laws, government orders and ministerial orders, and the like is accumulated, a recorded judicial case data in which data of judicial cases is accumulated, and at least one recorded data out of meta-keyword data constructed by associating non-retrieval keywords such as slang words with retrieval keywords adequate for replacing the non-retrieval keywords, verb and object data constructed by associating verbs and objects related to each other and associating retrieval keywords related to combinations of them, and aid flow data previously constructed as aid flowcharts by predicting information gathering query patterns for cases; and

a recorded computer program including, in correspondence with said each database, at least one retrieval processing means out of meta-keyword retrieval processing means, when a received keyword is a non-retrieval keyword, for reading an associated retrieval keyword from a meta-keyword database to perform retrieval processing, verb and object retrieval

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processing means for reading a retrieval keyword associated with a combination of a received verb and object from a verb and object database to perform retrieval processing, and aid flow retrieval processing means, when a retrieval pattern by a received retrieval keyword matches a pattern of an aid flowchart, for transmitting requests for additional information in sequence in accordance with a flow of the aid flowchart.

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